

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-14 OIC-02 OES-07 CIAE-00
COME-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00 FMC-02 INR-07 NSAE-00
CG-00 DLOS-09 L-03 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-02
AF-10 ARA-14 EA-12 NEA-10 /131 W
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R 231924Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2326

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OCON, IMCO, EWWT, PORG
SUBJECT: IMCO: SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE CARRIAGE OF DANGEROUS GOODS, 28TH SESSION

1. SUMMARY: SUBJECT MEETING WAS HELD AT IMCO HEAD-
QUARTERS IN LONDON FROM 16-20 JANUARY 1978. MAJOR ITEMS
OF DISCUSSION INCLUDED:

(A) CONSIDERATION OF AMENDMENTS TO THE INTERNATIONAL
MARITIME DANGEROUS GOODS CODE (IMDG);

(B) POSSIBLE AMENDMENT OF IMCO ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION
A.289(VIII) DEALING WITH THE HANDLING OF DANGEROUS GOODS
IN PORTS AND HARBORS;

(C) DRAFT AMENDMENT TO THE 1974 SOLAS CONVENTION
DEALING WITH FIRE SAFETY MEASURES FOR SHIPS CARRYING
DANGEROUS GOODS;

(D) RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING THE SAFE USE OF
PESTICIDES ON SHIPS.

SEVERAL POINTS EMPHASIZED BY THE US DELEGATION AND
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BROADLY SUPPORTED BY OTHER DELEGATIONS CONCERN THE
IMPORTANCE OF THE RAPID HANDLING OF ALL AMENDMENTS TO
THE INTERNATIONAL MARITIME DANGEROUS GOODS CODE. THAT
THIS CODE IS IMPORTANT TO ITS USERS IS DEMONSTRATED BOTH
BY THE PRESSURES THAT EACH DELEGATION RECEIVES FOR
RESPONSE TO REQUESTS FOR INTERPRETATION, CORRECTION OR
ADDITION AND BY CURRENT SALES OF THE DOCUMENT. IT IS BY

FAR IMCO'S BEST SELLER. THE INCREASING DEMAND IS LITTLE SHORT OF PHENOMENAL.

THERE ARE TWO MAJOR OBSTACLES TO EFFICIENT MAINTENANCE OF THIS DOCUMENT. FIRST IS THE MASSIVE SUBCOMMITTEE WORK-LOAD WHICH HAS RESULTED IN DELAYING SOME ITEMS OVER SEVERAL MEETINGS. THIS IS TRUE EVEN THOUGH THE EDITORIAL AND TECHNICAL WORK GROUP MEETS FOR TWO WEEKS BETWEEN SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS. THE SECOND REASON IS THE RESPONSE TIME FROM THE U.N. COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON TRANSPORT OF DANGEROUS GOODS. IN ACCORDANCE WITH ECOSOC RESOLUTIONS TO PURSUE HARMONIZATION AMONG ALL MODES OF TRANSPORTATION THE IMCO SUBCOMMITTEE ON CDG HAS REPEATEDLY EXPRESSED ITS INTENT TO CONFORM WHERE APPROPRIATE WITH THE U.N. INTER-MODAL BODY IN AREAS OF CLASSIFICATION, PACKAGING, AND MARKING.

SINCE THE QUALITY OF SUBCOMMITTEE ON CDG OUTPUT OFTEN DEPENDS ON RESPONSE RECEIVED FROM THE U.N. COMMISSION OF EXPERTS, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THAT BODY GIVE SOME PRIORITY TO RESPONSES TO IMCO. IT WAS ALSO EMPHASIZED THAT THE PARTICIPATING MEMBERS OF THE U.N. COMMISSION OF EXPERTS SHOULD MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO INCLUDE INDIVIDUALS WITH MARITIME INTEREST ON THEIR DELEGATIONS TO INSURE THAT PRIORITIES FOLLOWED/AND THE DECISIONS MADE ARE GOVERNED BY THE NEEDS AND PRACTICES OF ALL MODES OF

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TRANSPORT. END SUMMARY.

2. AMENDMENTS TO THE IMDG CODE. THE MAJORITY OF THE WORK IN THE PLENARY SESSION WAS DEVOTED TO THE CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE IMDG CODE. DECISIONS OF PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE TO THE UNITED STATES INCLUDED:

(A) THE ADOPTION OF PROVISIONS RECOGNIZING THE MAJORITY OF THE PLACARDS FOR FREIGHT CONTAINERS NOW REQUIRED BY US REGULATIONS:

(B) THE ADOPTION OF AN AMENDMENT REQUIRING THAT THE CLASSIFICATION OF ALL "N.O.S." CONSIGNMENTS BE CONFIRMED BY THE COMPETENT AUTHORITY PRIOR TO SHIPMENT. THE UNITED STATES DELEGATION ENTERED A RESERVATION RELATIVE TO THIS DECISION;

(C) THE ADOPTION OF AN AMENDMENT PROHIBITING THE USE OF PACKINGS WITH WIDE OPENINGS FOR THE TRANSPORT OF

STATES DELEGATION HAD STRENUOUSLY OPPOSED THIS AMENDMENT;

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(D) THE DISCUSSION CONCERNING AMENDMENTS RELATIVE TO THE DOCUMENTATION OF DANGEROUS GOODS SHIPMENTS WAS DEFERRED PENDING THE RESULTS OF WORK NEARING COMPLETION AT THE UNITED NATIONS CONCERNING MULTIMODAL DOCUMENTATION PROCEDURES.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS ON SAFE PRACTICE, ON DANGEROUS GOODS IN PORTS AND HARBORS. A MAJOR ITEM OF DISCUSSION WAS THE EXTENSIVE REVISION OF ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION A.289(VIII). A WORKING GROUP WAS FORMED TO CONSIDER THIS TOPIC. IT WAS UNDERTAKEN TO EXPAND THE RESOLUTION TO INCLUDE THE SAFE HANDLING AND STORAGE OF PACKAGED, BULK, SOLID, AND BULK LIQUID DANGEROUS CARGOES IN THE PORT AREA. AS SUCH THIS PROJECT WILL REQUIRE CLOSE COORDINATION BETWEEN THE CDG, BC, AND BCH SUBCOMMITTEES.

4. FIRE SAFETY MEASURES FOR SHIPS CARRYING DANGEROUS GOODS. THE SUBCOMMITTEE REVIEWED THE REPORTS OF THE TWO INTERSESSIONAL MEETINGS OF THE AD HOC GROUP COMPOSED OF MEMBERS OF THE CDG AND FP SUBCOMMITTEES. WORK IS PROGRESSING ON THE DRAFT REGULATION TO THE 1974 SOLAS CON-

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VENTION PRESCRIBING ADDITIONAL CONSTRUCTIONAL FEATURES FOR VESSELS ENGAGED IN THE CARRIAGE OF PACKAGED DANGEROUS GOODS. THE UNITED STATES HAS OPPOSED MANY OF THE NEW PROVISIONS TO BE PROPOSED BOTH IN THE CDG AND FP SUB-COMMITTEES WITH LIMITED SUCCESS. IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT THE WORK OF THIS AD HOC GROUP WILL BE COMPLETED WITHIN THE YEAR TO ENABLE THE DRAFT REGULATION TO BE PRESENTED TO THE ASSEMBLY EARLY IN 1979.

5. AMENDMENTS TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS ON SAFE USE OF PESTICIDES ON SHIPS (MSC/CIRC. 108). THE SUBCOMMITTEE CONSIDERED THIS ITEM IN THE PLENARY SESSION. THE MAJOR IMPETUS FOR CONSIDERING THIS AGENDA ITEM WAS A PAPER SUBMITTED BY CANADA, WHICH HAS BEEN EXPERIENCING A GREAT DEAL OF DIFFICULTY WITH FUMIGATION OF US BULK GRAIN SHIPS IN CANADIAN PORTS. THE CANADIAN POLICY WILL BE NOT TO ALLOW SHIPBOARD FUMIGATION IN CANADIAN PORTS UNTIL SUCH TIME AS SUFFICIENT GUIDELINES FOR THIS OPERATION ARE DEVELOPED. IT WAS DECIDED THAT A WORKING GROUP ON SAFE USE OF PESTICIDES ON SHIPS WOULD BE FORMED FOR THE 29TH SESSION OF CDG AND ALL DELEGATIONS WERE INVITED TO SUBMIT PAPERS ON THIS SUBJECT.

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